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## NO-COST HEPATITIS TESTS AND EDUCATION IN JULY



**Contact:**

Maggie Hall, PIO

[Margarita.Hall@FLHealth.gov](mailto:Margarita.Hall@FLHealth.gov)

(727) 824-6908 (media only)



The Florida Department of Health in Pinellas County (DOH-Pinellas) is providing no-cost rapid hepatitis C testing and education at two of its centers in July.

- **9 a.m. to noon, Tuesday, July 17**, at the Mid-County center, 8751 Ulmerton Rd., Largo
- **8 a.m. to noon, Monday, July 30**, at the Tarpon Springs center, 301 S. Disston.

It's especially important for Baby Boomers, those born between 1946 and 1964, and those who share needles to know their status because hepatitis can reside in the body without symptoms for decades. Knowing one's status can mean an opportunity for early treatment before symptoms flare up.

The term "hepatitis" means an inflammation of the liver. Hepatitis A, B and C are the most common form of viral hepatitis in the United States. These viruses can have similar symptoms, but different ways of being transmitted:

- **Hepatitis A** is a very contagious live infection that's usually spread when objects, food or stool from an infected person are eaten by others. An effective vaccine is available prevent the spread of hepatitis A.
- **Hepatitis B** spreads via bodily fluids from one person to another. Sex and contact with contaminated blood can pass it on. There is a vaccine to prevent hepatitis B. Two-thirds of people with hepatitis B don't know they are infected.
- **Hepatitis C** spreads when blood from a person with the infection enters another person's body. Sharing needles is a possible mode of transmission. Baby Boomers—older adults born between 1945 and 1965—have the highest hepatitis C rates among age groups over 30. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommend that Baby Boomers get tested for hepatitis C at least once in their lifetimes.

The CDC has an online tool to help adults determine their hepatitis risk. Go to <https://www.cdc.gov/hepatitis/riskassessment/index.htm> to take the quiz.

For information on DOH-Pinellas' Hepatitis Program, go to <http://pinellas.floridahealth.gov/programs-and-services/infectious-disease-services/hepatitis/index.html> or call (727) 824-6932. DOH-Pinellas provides hepatitis vaccines at its clinics.

For information about DOH-Pinellas, go to <http://pinellas.floridahealth.gov/index.html> or follow us on Twitter [@HealthyPinellas](https://twitter.com/HealthyPinellas).

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